Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Request for Iowa Four-Year College/University Performance Assessment System Funds

College/University Name: University of Dubuque

Program Contact Person:

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Statement of Assurances

Should a Performance Assessment System Award be made to the applicant in support of the activities proposed in this application, the authorized signature on the cover page of this application certifies to the Iowa Department of Education that the authorized official will:

1. Upon request, provide the Iowa Department of Education with access to records and other sources of information that may be necessary to determine compliance with appropriate federal and state laws and regulations;
2. Use grant funds to supplement and not supplant funds from nonfederal sources.

Certification by Authorized or Institutional Official:

The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in this application is correct, that the filing of this application is duly authorized by the governing body of this organization, or institution, and that the applicant will comply with the attached statement of assurances.

_____   _____

Typed or Printed Name of Authorized Official   Title

_____   _____

Signature of Authorized Official   Date

Please submit both electronically and hard copy to Barry Wilson, TQE Assessment Team Leader, Dept. of Ed. Psych. & Foundations, UNI, Cedar Falls, IA by May 1, 2008.

Process for Procuring Grant Funds:

1. Submit Grant Request Package; Postmarked by May 1, 2008
Grant Request Package Contents:
- Request for Performance Assessment System Funds Cover Page
- Action Plan
- Budget

2. Grant requests will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee, the Leadership Team, and the Iowa Department of Education.

3. Institution will be notified of a grant award by May 21, 2008

4. Contracts for awardees will be developed by the Iowa Department of Education upon notification to the IHE of the award.

5. It will take 30 days after the award notification for a contract to be executed and fully approved. This would be as per a June 1 notification.

6. Payments cannot be released until a contract is fully approved with all signatures.

7. Institutions should not incur costs before a contract is approved and plan accordingly.

8. To acquire each payment, an IHE must submit an invoice or letter with an original signature requesting funds. This is necessary for the release of each payment – fifty percent, forty percent, and final ten percent.

9. An Interim report must be submitted with an invoice by January 15, 2009. NOTE: an awardee will not receive the forty percent payment unless the Interim Report budget indicates that the first fifty percent has been spent.

10. A Final report must be submitted with an invoice by December 15, 2009

11. A report form or template is attached with this RFP. Please use it for the Interim and Final Reports. The form includes a narrative and budget.

The grant application and interim and final reports must be submitted electronically in addition to hard copy.

Criteria for Performance Assessment System Awards:.

I. Context

The University of Dubuque Teacher Preparation Program graduates approximately 35 teacher candidates per year. We offer programs in elementary education, secondary education (biology, general science, chemistry and English) and Physical Education and Health K-12. Elementary education majors comprise the majority of our graduates, 40-50 % of which are transfer students. There are five full time faculty teaching education courses. We have a core of five adjunct professors, who have been teaching education courses for us for the last 6 years and are actively involved in the program. We have a close alliance with the Physical Education Department.

One of the components of The University of Dubuque's mission is a commitment to serving students from underserved populations and first generation college students. At present, approximately 25% of the student body is composed of students from diverse backgrounds. Some of these students, many who come under prepared for college, want to become teachers. The faculty in the Teacher Preparation Program is strongly committed to helping all students reach their goals; therefore, they nurture, encourage, and locate resources to help students meet the program's entrance criteria, without compromising the program standards. We keep the integrity of the program in tack by always keeping a focus on the mission of the Program: preparing qualified, caring, effective teachers.
We have just recently completed Grant I and are waiting funding for Grant II. The final report for grant I is below. Once the funding for Grant II is available, we anticipate that we will make rapid progress on meeting all of the goals by December 2008.

We had three main goals for this first grant, development of a unit assessment reporting system, faculty development and candidate training for the assessment system, and collaboration with other Dubuque colleges on using an assessment system. The following is a brief summary of the progress we made towards meeting the goals of the grant.

Goal one stated that we could begin to develop a consistent unit assessment system for the Education Department at the University of Dubuque. To help us achieve this goal, we decided to contract with the LiveText Corporation, who has a software system for developing electronic portfolios which would also provide us with candidate and unit assessment data and a reporting system for unit assessment.   However, we encountered many glitches in the beginning stages of working with LiveText which slowed our progress in developing our electronic portfolio system. Our major issue was trying to resolve compatibility issues between the LiveText system and the university's technology system which was

compounded by a lack of communication from the LiveText personnel. We spent the majority of the Fall 2006 semester getting that issue resolved.

During the Spring semester of 2007, the Education faculty made a commitment to stay with LiveText as the vehicle for development of electronic portfolios. The Education Department bought LiveText memberships for our students, and began to develop the infrastructure needed for portfolio development and assessment within LiveText. Debra Stork, a new professor hired in the Fall of 2006 with a strong background in technology, accepted an overload assignment in Spring 2007 to take the lead in working with LiveText and learning how to develop the structure necessary for developing and assessing a portfolio that measured our program goals. Under Debra Stork's guidance, the Education faculty began to get involved in working with LiveText during the Spring semester of 2007. We became more familiar with the LiveText software as we experimented with forms and maneuvering the system through small assignments using LiveText.

We also had several formal training sessions in LiveText. On April 5, 2007, the Education faculty and support staff had a day long retreat that included working with the LiveText software, rewriting the components for the portfolio rubric, and developing the criteria for the reflection piece required for our portfolio artifacts. On May 4, 2007, the faculty held an afternoon session on developing the criteria for the portfolio system which was facilitated by a LiveText representative.

During 2006-07, the Education Department also developed excel spreadsheets for candidate and unit assessment. In addition, we began to explore what data the campus Jenzebar system could provide for unit assessment.

Goal two of this grant focused on faculty development and student training for candidate and unit assessment, a key component to making the electronic system functional within the program. This has been accomplished in several ways. We have utilized LiveText personnel to help us in this endeavor. They came to the University of Dubuque campus for faculty training on May 5, 2007 and December 10, 2007. These two training sessions have provided faculty with increased understanding, confidence and the ability to work with the LiveText software system. During Spring semester 2008, the Education faculty will be applying their skills working with LiveText as they field test the rubrics we have created to assess candidate portfolio artifacts and reflection for rater reliability. Candidates who are enrolled in the portfolio class this Spring semester will also receive experience in the LiveText system as they will be sending their artifacts and reflection to the faculty for review. By the end of Spring semester 2008, we hope to have the portfolio piece of the LiveText system ready for implementation in the Fall. Because

research proves that the most effective way to implement change is through on-going faculty development training, we plan to continue utilizing LiveText training through several means including on-site training during the next grant.

The Education Department also wants to include the faculty from the secondary content areas in the unit assessment system. As a first step in that process, faculty from the areas of English and science were invited and supported to participate in an assessment institute which provided them with additional background knowledge in candidate and unit assessment.

Candidates in the program began to utilize the LiveText software during Fall 2007 through the Technology in Education course and attendance at a series of two-hour workshops offered in November and December. A one hour (no-credit) course was implemented in Spring 2008 for sophomore and junior candidates in the program, which will provide candidate training and practice with LiveText and the electronic portfolio. This group of candidates will be the first to submit their portfolios electronically when they apply for approval to student teach.

Goal three centered on developing a collaborative effort with the other colleges in Dubuque for LiveText training. We held one cooperative LiveText training session shortly after receiving the initial grant money. It did not prove to be as productive as we thought because all of the programs were at different stages in development of portfolios and a unit assessment system. The Dubuque area colleges decided that this format would not meet all of our needs, therefore, we hold individual training sessions at this time. Since we all continue to use LiveText, we do collaborate on an informal basis for problem solving and support. We also collaborated with Drake University as we were trying to learn how to develop our system for collection of artifacts for the electronic portfolio.

II. Project Narrative

The University of Dubuque Education Department is ready to broaden its perspective on candidate and program assessment. We understand that successful professional development while learning anything new has to be an ongoing process. Therefore, the main focus of this stage of grant funding is on professional development. This grant funding will provide faculty the opportunity to become more adept with the LiveText program through attending sessions at their National Conference and having discussions with people from other institutions who are also using LiveText for program and candidate assessment in a different format or context. The funding will also enable faculty to explore the assessment arena by attending conferences within their discipline and learning how assessment is being utilized within their field. More importantly, associate faculty from the disciplines of English, science

and physical education will become more knowledgeable of assessment as we provide support for their attendance at conferences within and out of their discipline. To ensure that knowledge from engaging in professional development on assessment does not just occur on an individual basis, the Education faculty will hold a minimum of two round table discussions on assessment with the associate faculty during the course of the Spring and Fall semesters of 2009 to share new ideas and engage in dialogue on assessment which hopefully will lead to the improvement of candidate and program assessment in our program.

Assessment plans and activities within the system we have developed needed to be reviewed to determine if meaningful data is being developed. The issues of reliability and validity for rubrics are always subject to review because of the subjectivity and personal views of the reviewer. The Education Department faculty will use some of the grant funding to hold a retreat to test our unit rubric for reliability among ourselves. We will invite the associate faculty to join us in this process. Plans are to bring in a consultant who will guide us through this process. The Advisory Council for our program likes to be involved in meaningful activities. Thus, we will use their assistance in determining the reliability and validity of our unit and portfolio rubrics. This grant will support that endeavor.

Many of our students come from families with limited means and the Education Department is committed to keeping our student fees to a minimum. The grant funding will support that commitment by providing the monetary support to purchase LiveText memberships for our candidates. The grant will also continue to support our technology faculty member who serves as a problem solver in the technical side of LiveText.

III. Action Plan

Goal	Objectives	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Budget Request
Provide faculty development and training for the Education Department and Associate faculty from the disciplines for our secondary education program	**Support opportunity for attending the Live Text Conference and other conferences with an assessment component** **Provide individual assistance. Support with the LiveText system for faculty and transfer and new students in the program**	**The Education Faculty and support staff and students will attend the Live Text Conference** **Support attendance at conferences that have an assessment component for Education Faculty and Associate Faculty** **Student assistants and Deb Stork will be available to work with faculty and students**	**Dr. Wilcox and Prof. Stork** **Dr. Abele** **Professor Stork and two student assistants, administrative assistant and/or LiveText Consultant**	**Spring 2009-Fall 2009** **Spring 2009-Fall 2009** **Spring 2008-09**	**Conference Expenses $ 3,000.00** **Registration, lodging, meals and transportations to conference** **$7,000.00** **Stipends $3,000**

Goal	Objectives	Actions Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline	Budget Request
Develop procedures that will assist in ensuring reliability and validity of the key indicators for candidate and program assessment	**Rubrics will be reviewed and changed to ensure reliability of the unit and portfolio products**	**Faculty retreat for education, associate faculty to field test rubrics used for portfolio and unit for reliability and validity** **Advisory Committee meetings with a focus on field testing the unit rubric for reliability and validity**	**Dr. Wilcox and Prof. Stork Consultant** **Dr. Abele and Prof. Stork**	**January term 2009** **Spring 2009**	**Faculty Retreat and Advisory Committee meetings— meals, stipends, mileage** **$2,000**
Continue to support education student memberships in LiveText	**Purchas LiveText memberships for 20 students**	**Purchase membership in LiveText for education majors**	**Dr. Abele and Susie Scott**	**Dec. 2009**	**LiveText memberships $1,780.00**

IV. Sustainability Plan.

We are a small program so sustaining the performance assessment system is workable. The University of Dubuque Teacher Preparation Program will continue to use the LiveText assessment system and the Excel data bases to collect data for candidate and program assessment. The faculty has discovered that candidate's data provides a better perspective when making decisions on the program benchmarks. The Education faculty has been discussing making changes to the program curriculum. Using some of the program data we have already collected is helping us to look at the big picture and not just relying on anecdotal data to guide our decision making. As a result, we have decided to collect data on selected standards over a longer period of time before we decide on what type of changes need to be made.

We, the faculty at the University of Dubuque, were highly resistant to the concept of an electronic assessment system. Now that we have implemented some of the facets of the plan, and have developed a comfort level with working with the system, we have changed our attitude. Therefore, we are committed to improving and maintaining a performance assessment system for data collection.

LiveText will be instituted campus-wide beginning in the Fall semester of 2008, thus, candidates will have a membership in LiveText and be familiar with the system when they enter the program. A support person for LiveText will be hired by the University, which will make finding the resources to support our department technology faculty member in this area, a moot point. The maintaining of the excel data bases

will continue to be done by the department secretary, work study student, or individual faculty. The Director of Student Teaching will maintain the data on the student teacher assessments. Practicum faculty will keep data on the assessments used in their courses. All Education faculty and eventually associate faculty will be involved in the portfolio assessment. Plans are for the Education faculty to set aside part of one day before each semester to review the data that has been collected, determine if any new types of data needs to be collected, and determine if any components of the assessment system need to be changed.

V. Budget Requests

Personnel		
Wages	Administrative Assistant Salary $750.00	**$700.00**
Expenses (Travel, Meals, Lodging)		
Professional Services/Professional Development		
Fees: Stipends: Stipends for LiveText Training Deb Stork Stipend for LiveText Support	Faculty/personnel stipend for retreat Deb Stork Stipend	**$2,300.00**
Expenses (Mileage, Meals, Lodging, Room Rental)	LiveText and other related conferences on assessment, retreats, advisory committee meetings	**$12,000.00**
Software	LiveText Software - 20 students @ 89.00	**$ 1,780.00**
Hardware		
Supplies and Materials		
Phone/Mail		
Other – specify:		
Other – specify:		
Total		**$16,780.00**

VI. Budget Narrative:

The University of Dubuque Education faculty is strongly committed to improving their understanding of the many components of assessment so we can prepare our candidates on how to use assessment to guide student learning in their own classroom. The funding from this grant will help us in this process. Professional development funds are very limited at the University of Dubuque, therefore, this round of grant funding is targeted at providing the opportunity for the Education faculty and associate faculty to acquire a deeper understanding of assessment through avenues of their choice. The Education Department takes pride in being a wise steward of any resources that are available, thus, we will exercise prudence in spending the grant funds that are given to us.

Personnel

Wages: This area reflects our need for personnel resources which will provide a support system for students and faculty in the implementation of the electronic system. The Department Secretary/Administrative Assistant will be compensated for the extra hours required for developing excel data bases, entering data, and producing reports in addition to providing support for candidates as they learn the system.

Professional Services

Fees: A stipend for our Education Technology faculty member, Deb Stork, is also requested as she serves as liaison to our LiveText Consultant, conducts portfolio sessions for the candidates, and assists faculty with LiveText concerns. This area will also provide a stipend for the faculty to work on improving the reliability and validity of the Unit and portfolio rubrics. Consultant fees for the retreat would also be taken from this part of the budget.

Expenses: The funds in this line item would support faculty and support personnel to attend the LiveText Conference in Chicago, IL which is held in July. This is a good professional development opportunity to enhance the department facultys' understanding of how to better utilize the LiveText system. Education faculty along with associate faculty, who support our secondary program, need support to attend conferences and other meetings so they can develop a more in-depth understanding of assessment. Funds in this line item, along with additional funding from the University professional development fund, will help provide this opportunity. This line item also covers expenses for the Advisory Council meetings that will be focused on assessment as well as the faculty retreat for assessment.

Software

We would like to continue the support for student memberships in LiveText in the next year of the grant.